

to the top. The flora there is very different from anything we have even at the lower part of the cliffs, and in many respects is similar to that of the limestone rocks of the Lankawi islands.

In recording this discovery of a connecting link between two regions so far apart as Tenasserim and Borneo, I may mention another, *viz.* that of *Dendrobium heterocarpum* Wall, (*D aureum* Lindl.) which was known to occur in India (Nepal, Assam, Malabar and Ceylon), in Java, and the Philippine islands, and which has recently been found by Mr. A. B. Stephens in Perak, on the Thaiping hills.

H. N. R.

Boriah.

In part II. of Clifford and Swettenham's Malay-English Dictionary, under the head of BORIAH, I find *Boriah*,

بوریه. A topical song. *Bácha boriah* باج بوریه. To sing a topical song.

No derivation of the word is given. The use of the word is chiefly confined to the pantomimes or mimic plays which are acted by Malays in Penang Town during the month of Muharam. It is of Persian origin, according to Forbes, and means a "mat" in Hindustani. The following account of the word which I have received from an Indian in Penang will throw some light on the subject, as I believe, fanciful derivations of the word have been suggested.

"The plain meaning of the word Boriah in the Hindustani and Deccan language is a place of prayer (praying carpet), and in Malay they call it *Tikar* (a mat). Formerly in the year 1845, the 21st Regiment was transferred from Madras to Penang. The Muhammedans of the Regiment used to be given ten days' leave in the month of Muharram for the purpose of mourning for the grandsons of the prophet. These military men used to form parties and sing songs of mourning. For instance, representing four persons, Nanak Shah, Jogi Majnun, Balva Ghaghri, and Boria, they used to dress up in clothes made of mats and mourn for Husain, and used to recite the following piece of poetry—

“ Boria the best of its kind ;
“ Boria everywhere in the world ;
“ Boria the beautiful (was) seen ;
“ Sacred and pure Boria.

“ In the countries of Madras
“ The Boria is made of grass ;
“ Fences are made with bamboo ;
“ Boria is green in colour. etc., etc.

“But in Penang the name of Boria is from the 21st Regiment, and has become celebrated. Now-a-days the Malays have given their own different names to it, but they call all of them Boria for the purpose of asking charity for them. In Madras wherever the Regiment is the Boria play is performed.”

H. T. Haughton.